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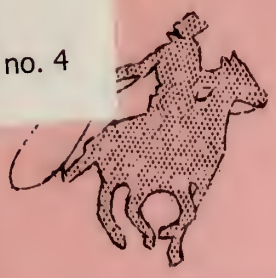

THE MONTANA ROUNDUP

OF INDUSTRIAL HEALTH BRIEFS

Montana State Board of Health
B. K. Kilbourne, M.D., Executive Officer

Division of Industrial Hygiene
Paul M. Giever, Director

July - August, 1947 | Helena, Montana | Vol. 3, No. 4

COST OF INDUSTRIAL HEALTH INJURIES - SILICOSIS

Silicosis cost Montana taxpayers $195,915.02 for the fiscal year 1946-1947, and the last Legislature appropriated $330,000.00 for silicosis benefits for the present fiscal year of 1947-1948. These expenditures began with a modest $128,038.20 for 1942-1943 with an average number of 328 persons participating. In 1943-1944, 360 persons participated, and $130,781.11 were expended. For the fiscal year of 1944-1945, $136,065.00 were spent and 374 persons received benefits, and, in 1945-1946, the figure rose to $160,809.92 with 443 persons participating. Benefits were paid to 537 persons in 1946-1947 when a total of $195,915.02 was paid out, and it is now estimated that approximately 600 persons are receiving payments as silicotics.

The tremendous amount of money being expended in this program is startling. It is even more startling when it is considered that health damage is still occurring in Montana's industries, not only through contact with silica dust but from exposure to lead, arsenic, and other metals as well as toxic vapors, liquids and gases. It is not the job of the Industrial Hygiene Division to estimate the cost to taxpayers of paying for industrial health damage. Ten years ago, the Division was organized to evaluate and assist with recommendations for control of the hazards in industrial operations so that there might be a reduction in human suffering and savings in expenditures for care for health damage in the future. Such a program can accomplish a great deal with the whole-hearted cooperation and assistance of management, labor, as well as medical and dental men in the state.

Labor can assist the program by advising the department of occupational health hazards in their working environment.

Management can assist in this program by asking for an evaluation of a suspected or known hazard and then taking the necessary steps to control or eliminate it.

Men of the medical and dental professions can help by reporting actual or suspected occupational diseases as is required by law.

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COST OF INDUSTRIAL HEALTH INJURIES - SILICOSIS continued:

Montana is a state in which there is a relatively small number of persons employed in operations that are particularly hazardous to health. The control or elimination of hazards could, therefore, be accomplished with complete cooperation and participation in the Industrial Hygiene Program.--Paul M. Giever, Director, Division of Industrial Hygiene, Montana State Board of Health.

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EXTENDED HEALTH EDUCATION SERVICES IN THE MONTANA STATE BOARD OF HEALTH

Health Education Services in the State Board of Health are now extended to all phases of public health activities. Health Education Services have been provided in the Maternal and Child Health Division since 1934, where the activities have been predominately concerned with the School Health Program.

The Health Education staff as of July 1, 1947, will consist of the Director and a Field Consultant. The position of Director is filled by K. Elizabeth Anderson who has been the Consultant in Health Education on the Maternal and Child Health Staff since 1942. It is expected the position of Field Consultant will be filled within a short time.

Health education is generally accepted as vital to all phases of public health. Changes are occurring rapidly in the field of public health as they are in many other fields. New discoveries are constantly adding new knowledge. Many demands for reinterpretation and adaptation are being made as the result of experience and expanding programs, as well as in the light of new discoveries. If the health practices of individuals and communities kept step with the scientific health knowledge available, the health of the nation would be greatly improved. Health Educators aim to interpret scientific health information in such a manner that this information will be related to practical experience whenever possible.

The health educators will help other personnel working in the field of health make their services more educational in character and will act in a liaison capacity between lay agencies, groups and individuals, and, technically trained health personnel. Consultation in Health Education will continue to be given in the School Health Program.

The Division of Health Education will assume responsibility for the preparation and circulation of health education materials and to assist others who request help in the preparation or selection of such material.

Books and films on practically all topics of health are available on request on a lending basis. Pamphlet material is available for general distribution.

It is planned to issue bulletins transmitting information concerning the activities, programs, policies, and services available from the State Board of Health to interested agencies, groups and individuals.

The staff is available for speaking engagements and for individual or group conferences. It will also be possible to give help to various groups in planning programs on health.--K. Elizabeth Anderson, Director, Health Education, Montana State Board of Health.

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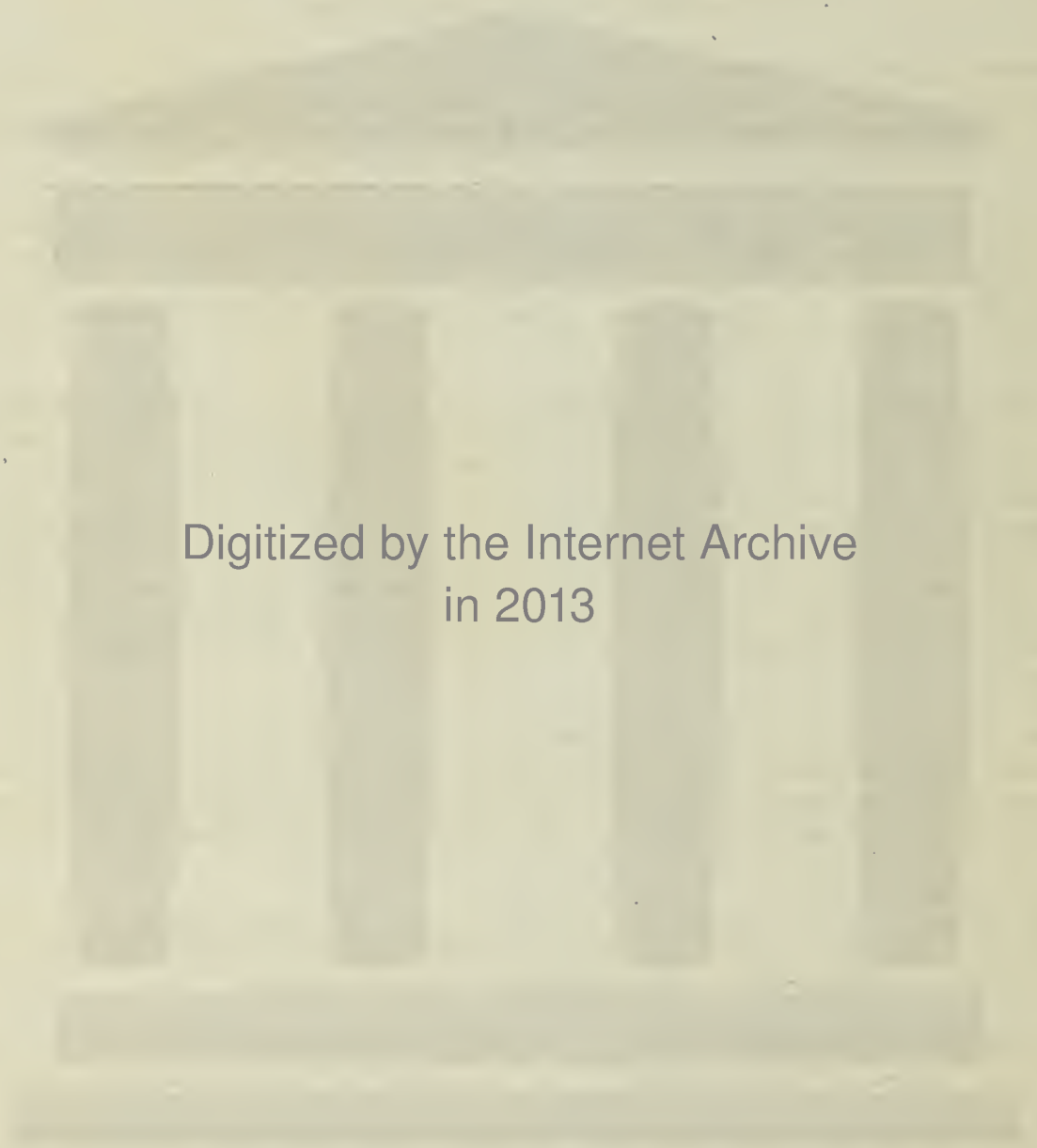

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BEAT THE HEAT

Heat cramps, heat exhaustion and heat shock are more apt to occur at this time of year. Sickness from heat is no longer considered to be an inevitable result of working in high temperatures and its occurrence should be infrequent if preventive measures are taken.

Efficiency and production decrease when workers are subjected to intense heat as they become over-fatigued and more liable to accidents. A slight air movement maintained in the workroom aids in the evaporation of perspiration which tends to cool the body and assist in maintaining proper body temperatures.

Excessive perspiration causes a rapid depletion of the body's salt which must be replaced without undue delay. Heat lost through evaporation of perspiration tends to help maintain normal heart beat and minimize increase in body temperature and respiration. This resulting strain on the circulatory system, accompanied by the salt and water loss of the body, are the main causative factors in heat illnesses.

Heat prostration is characterized by a sudden weakness, faintness and collapse. Heat cramps are evidenced by severe pains in the extremities and the abdomen, while in heat prostration there is a marked increase in body temperature, no perspiration, intense headache and vertigo. The important treatment is to remove afflicted worker from exposure and call the doctor.

The elimination of the causative factors for heat sickness varies in each industry and each location must be considered as an individual problem for study and improvement. In instances where discomfort is due mainly to high summer temperatures, numerous simple measures may be employed to relieve major factors. One measure often applicable is the use of fans to cause air movement; another and probably more important measure is the increase of salt in the diet, as salt lost through excessive perspiration must be resupplied without delay to prevent heat sickness. Salt content of the body can be maintained at the proper level in hot weather by a large increase in salt intake. This is most easily accomplished by the oral administration of salt tablets. Dispensers located at every drinking fountain in the plant, accompanied by posters or pamphlets, will acquaint personnel of the desirability of maintaining a proper salt balance in the body, and to drink plenty of water which is not too cold.

It is desirable to provide enteric coated salt tablets for some individuals are unable to take ordinary sodium chloride without becoming violently nauseated. The enteric coat prevents the dissolution of the salt in the stomach and thus prevents nausea.

Attention should also be directed to the advisability of getting plenty of rest, nourishing meals, avoidance of strenuous exercise after work, frequent baths, and light, clean clothing.

All of these things will help beat the heat!

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FUNGUS INFECTION

The fungus infection, "athlete's foot" is a serious problem in many industries. It thrives in showers and locker rooms where warmth and moisture encourage propogation of the fungi. Symptoms of this infection are small blisters, cracks in the skin, redness, and a troublesome itching.

The three types of attack for prevention against this irritable fungus infection are:

(1) Floor cleanliness, particularly keeping the floors dry and airing them as much as possible.

(2) Continuous disinfection of the floors by chemical or physical means.

(3) Personal hygiene of those who use the showers. This includes keeping the feet as clean and dry as possible, use of fungicidal powders on the feet, and frequent and thorough washing and sterilizing of the socks.

Floors kept clean and dry and exposed to fresh air as much as possible is the simplest and probably the most effective method of preventing this infection. Dusting powders of sodium propionate or a mixture of sodium thiosulfate and boric acid are used quite effectively.

Disinfection of footwear is also desirable. An effective dusting powder consists of 10 percent boric acid in talc. Sodium propionate as a 2 percent dusting powder has also been recommended. Formaldehyde fumes are also used.

Special attention given to the above preventitives will aid in controlling this infectious menace which is so prevalent today.

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THINK IT OVER!

According to the Magazine FREE WORLD, archaeologists digging in the ancient Euphrates Valley have uncovered a layer of agrarian culture 8,000 years old, and beneath it two other layers of much older vintage, the latter being of the caveman era. Continuing their digging they came upon still another older layer, this one of fused green glass.

Just in case it may have slipped your mind, brother, may we remind you that when the first atomic bomb was tested at Los Alamos, the desert sand in the immediate vicinity turned to fused green glass.--Chemical and Engineering News, July, 1947.

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